

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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70

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15

ACDA-19 IO-14 NIC-01 DRC-01 /127 W

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R 191301Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3472

INFO SECDEF

CJCS

COMUSSAG

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 11413

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, CB

SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT ON CONSCRIPTION

REF: PHNOM PENH CONFIDENTIAL 11281

1. A PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE TO EXPAND FANK ACCESSIONS ALMOST TENFOLD HAS THUS FAR ADDED MUCH MORE CONFUSION THAN IMPETUS TO THE CONSCRIPTION AND RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN. ACTING IN A CHARACTERISTICALLY PRECIPITOUS MANNER, LON NOL LATE ON OCTOBER 17 ORDERED THAT THE CITY'S DAILY QUOTA BE RAISED FROM 250 TO 2,500 BEGINNING TODAY. CONSCRIPTION CHIEF OF STAFF MG THAPPAN NGINN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS TARGET IS UNREALISTIC AND ASSURED US YESTERDAY THAT HE WILL URGE THE PRESIDENT TO LOWER HIS SIGHTS WHEN IT IS MADE CLEAR DURING THE NEXT DAY OR SO THAT NOWHERE NEAR THIS NUMBER OF RECRUITS CAN BE GATHERED UP. IN THE MEANTIME A CRASH PROGRAM HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN TO INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF THE RECEPTION CENTER BY CONSTRUCTING TEMPORARY BUILDINGS, AND A SEARCH FOR OTHER LODGING SITES IS  
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UNDERWAY.

2. WHEN CITY SUBDIVISION (KHAND) OFFICIALS NOTED THAT THEIR FACILITIES COULD NOT HANDLE THE LARGE INPUT DEMANDED BY THE MARSHAL, IT WAS DECIDED TO MOVE ALL EXAMINING BOARDS TO THE RECEPTION CENTER. ALTHOUGH THIS ACTION MAY EVENTUALLY INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY OF THE SCREENING PROCESS AND DECREASE CHANCES FOR LEAKAGE BETWEEN SCREENING AND RECEPTION, THE INITIAL RESULT TODAY WAS MASS CONFUSION, AS LONG LINES OF YOUTH WAITING TO GET INTO THE CRAMPED EXAMINING BOARD FACILITIES MINGLED WITH RECRUITS AND EXAMINING BOARD MEMBERS COMPLAINED OF IMPOSSIBLE WORKING CONDITIONS. THE RECEPTION CENTER COMMANDER MANAGED TO RESTORE SOME ORDER BY SHIPPING ALL RECRUITS QUICKLY OUT TO THE TRAINING CENTER. WHEN THE DUST SETTLED THIS EVENING, ONLY 136 NEW RECRUITS WERE BEDDED DOWN AT THE CENTER( COMPARED WITH 443 RECRUITS TAKEN IN YESTERDAY).

3. AS OF 1700 HOURS ON OCTOBER 19 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS AND CONSCRIPTS PROCESSED THROUGH THE RECEPTION CENTER STOOD AT 1880. BECAUSE OF THE DAY'S CONFUSION AND LATE MEETINGS OF CITY OFFICIALS, WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO GET A BREAKDOWN ON OTHER STATISTICS . THE KHAND CHIEFS TO WHOM WE SPOKE YESTERDAY AND TODAY, HOWEVER, UNANIMOUSLY AGREED THAT THEIR NEW QUOTAS ARE IMPOSSIBLY HIGH. THE CHIEF OF THE CITY'S LARGEST KHAND (DECHO) SAID THAT, WHILE THREE MEN NOT REPORTING HAVE BEEN HAULED IN BY SECURITY FORCES, THE NUMBER OF THOSE NOT ANSWERING SUMMONS MAKES FOLLOW-UP ACTION IMPOSSIBLE. THE CHIEF OF ONE OF THE CITY'S SMALLER KHANDS, ON THE OTHER HAND, INDICATED THAT HE WOULD RESORT TO FORCED ROUND-UPS.

4. WE EXPECT THINGS TO GET BACK ON THE TRACK OVER THE WEEKEND.  
ENDERS

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NNN

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